

New Method to Estimate Vegetative Cover on Army Training Lands

The Corps of Engineers has issued a new Public Works Technical Bulletin (PWTB) that describes a method to estimate vegetative cover on training lands using digital photographs and commercially available imagery analysis software. PWTB 200-1-37, "Method to Estimate Vegetative Cover on Army Training Lands," is available on the TECHINFO website, <http://www.hnd.usace.army.mil/techinfo/CPW/pwtb.htm>.

The estimation method was developed by the U.S. Army Engineer Research and Development Center (ERDC) as a means to provide a quantitative, accurate, and inexpensive technique that does not require extensive technical skills to estimate ground cover and vegetative damage on training lands. It is based on an analysis of digital photographs taken randomly to document vegetative cover with the results compared to three other common methods: visual ground cover estimates, GIS vegetative layer analysis, and basal cover estimates using the point-intercept method.

The results showed that analysis of digital photographs using image analysis software is an accurate, cost-effective way to estimate vegetative cover and basal cover. The method has potential application at all U.S. Army installations.

For more information about this project, please contact the ERDC Public Affairs Office, 217-373-6714.

